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## Montana Pupil Transportation News and Updates May 2002



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### INTERESTING TIDBITS

#### **Did you know that there is a School District #1 in every county in the state?**

I get plenty of calls each day. Sometimes the caller knows me so well that she will say, "Hi, this is Shauna at School District #1. Please call me back as soon as you can." If Shauna had told me the county or the district name, I could eventually find her. Without leaving some good clues, Shauna may not hear from me. Please be sure to let me know your phone number. In some cases, there is a slim chance that I might recognize your voice!

#### **School Bus Safety**

Collins Bus Corporation and Safe Sam would like to see everyone learn about school bus safety. They are offering their coloring book online to [download free!](#) This is an excellent way of teaching school bus safety. Go to the following web site:

[http://www.collinsbus.com/safe\\_sam.html](http://www.collinsbus.com/safe_sam.html)

#### **Since You Asked**

#### ***We shortened our route during second semester. Now what should I do?***

This is an easy one. The original route with 25 miles is already named Route #1, for example. Let's say that you operated Route #1 at that mileage for 51 days. When you amended the route, you sent me a new TR-1 showing 20 miles. This becomes Route #1 A. When you complete the TR-6, report Route #1 with 51 days and 25 miles. Write in Route #1 A for 39 days and 20 miles, then submit the claim.

#### ***Our bus driver certificates are all current and up-to-date. The report OPI sent says that some of the dates are not correct. What should I do?***

In most cases, this happens because I did not receive the TR-35 with the updated information. Sometimes it is because of a data entry error. I can now look the driver certificates up, but it is really nice if you have time to fax me a copy of the original certificate. If we keep working on this, we will

eventually have current and accurate data in the database. I appreciate all the help that I have received from district staff in this effort. Please remember that changing the date on the Drivers with Expired Certificates report is not good enough. I need the updated TR-35 to verify the changes.

#### ***I have all these old blank transportation forms in my file. What should I do with them?***

We have been working very hard to update all transportation forms. Please toss all old forms in the recycle bin. If you don't have the new forms yet, call me at 444-3096 and I will mail you a packet of forms. We have placed all of the new forms on our new transportation web site. On your browser, go to [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us) then click on <programs and services>, then click on <Pupil Transportation>. You will find all of the forms there.

#### ***We have heard a lot about the proposed standards. When will OPI be sending them out and when will they become effective?***

Members of the Montana Pupil Transportation Advisory Committee have been invited to attend the Board of Public Education hearing on May 17 at 9:30 a.m. in the Montana Higher Education Complex Meeting Room at 2500 Broadway in Helena. We expect action on the request for adoption at that time. Once adopted, the standards document will be printed and distributed. Updates to the TR-13 are also being prepared at this time. I expect that the new standards will become effective in August.

The proposed standards can be found at [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us) then pick, <Pupil Transportation> from the Programs and Services menu.

#### **School Bus Recalls**

**Recall 01V-322** involves Thomas Built buses, ER Transit and MVP-ER models, manufactured in High Point, NC between July 22, 2001 and October 17, 2001 equipped with Williams Controls Electronic throttle pedal. Williams Controls has determined that some of these units may have been manufactured with a defective floor mounted electronic throttle control pedals manufactured by Williams Controls, Inc.

**Recall 02V-085** involves Thomas MVP-ER's built in High Point, NC between May 13, 1995 and March 20, 2001. Misalignment of the fan drive system components can cause premature belt and pulley bearing wear. Thomas has developed a procedure to correct concerns of proper alignment of the fan drive system components on the MVP-ER, and to update the fan drive system.

**Recall 02V-018.022** involves Thomas ER Transit, MVP-ER, and MVP-EF manufactured in High Point, NC between September 7, 2001 and November 1, 2001 equipped with Meritor Wabco ABS-Controls. Meritor Wabco is the manufacturer of the Pneumatic ABS valve packages that were used in the production of your bus. Meritor Wabco has determined that the valves were assembled with low torque and this could lead to air leaks at any of the ABS valve package interface joints. Brake system pressure reductions could occur during braking or normal operation with units equipped with the traction control option, potentially extending stopping distances.

Customers involved will be or have been notified directly by Thomas. Customers can contact their dealers to arrange for repairs to be made.

## HOW TO CONTACT NHTSA

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is the Federal government agency responsible for assuring the safety of vehicles traveling on public roadways. The Auto Safety Hotline was established by NHTSA to allow members of the public to communicate their concerns relating to motor vehicle safety to the agency.

The Hotline collects complaints relating to:

- Current safety recall campaigns
- Safety-related defects found in a motor vehicle or item of motor vehicle equipment

The Hotline also distributes information on the following topic areas:

- Current safety recall campaigns
- Current safety defect and noncompliance investigations conducted by NHTSA
- Child safety seats
- Safety belts and air bags
- Drunk driving literature
- Annual safety recalls report
- Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards
- Motor vehicle import requirements
- Odometer fraud
- Uniform tire grading specifications

The Hotline can be reached from anywhere in the United States and its territories by calling (888) 327-4236 or (800) 327-4236. Operators are available to take your calls Monday

through Friday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Eastern time.

Consumers who contact the Hotline during non-operational hours can leave a message on the answering machine and will receive a response on the next business day. Spanish speaking operators are also available. Hearing impaired persons may contact the Hotline at (800) 424-9152 or (202) 366-7800. Information is now available on the Internet at: <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>

## School Bus and Driver listings included in this mailing.

I think that we are getting down to the final edit on the school bus listing as well as the driver certification listings. I want to thank everyone who has so promptly edited and returned the lists. My goal is to have accurate data and with your help, we will have exactly that. I think that the data is very good at this point, however, please check your lists to make sure that they are accurate. Please compare the bus routes (TR-1) to the bus listing to make sure that you do not have a bus listed on a route that you have asked me to remove.

## PROMPTLY RETURN TRAINING VIDEOS

Training Video News...

In an effort to build the OPI Pupil Transportation Video Library, I have ordered several videos to preview. Hopefully we will have new training videos for the coming school year. I will log them in and advertise as soon as we purchase them. If you have any suggestions regarding training videos, please email me at [mmougeot@state.mt.us](mailto:mmougeot@state.mt.us) or you can reach me by calling (406) 444-3096.

## IMPORTANT DATES

**May 10, 2002** Second Semester TR-5's and TR-6's due from districts to county superintendent

**May 24, 2002** Second Semester TR-5's and TR-6's due from county superintendents to the OPI

**May 25, 2002** TR-13's (Bus Inspection Form) mailed to Districts **(Revised forms have been sent to the printer and have not been received back yet – OPI will mail TR-13's as soon as possible)**

**June 19, 20, 21, 2002** MAPT Conference in Belgrade, Montana

**June 25, 2002** Second Semester Transportation payment sent to Counties for distribution to school districts

**Update driver certificates, bus inspection forms, route information and contracts regularly.**